

Lehi project to ease Main Street gridlock

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LEHI — There's no such thing as a mad dash out of Lehi, Saratoga Springs or Eagle Mountain.

When people in those areas want to escape to I-15, there's only one way out: Lehi Main Street, a one-lane road in each direction that promises stop-and-go traffic at any time of the day, except maybe 3 a.m.

Perhaps that's why the crowd last week at the Lehi Legacy Recreation Center was fairly easy on Utah Department of Transportation employees who were trying to explain to them the three-mile project at 2100 North to connect Redwood Road and I-15 at 1200 West that will bring construction, dust and detours.

With construction slated to begin in December and finish in fall 2011, the \$130 million project is actually part of the Mountain View Corridor, a new road in western Salt Lake and Utah counties that planners envision as a freeway. Some day, provided enough money and need, planners hope it will span from I-80 to the Lehi Main Street exit, said Dave Smith, UDOT spokesman.

The first phases of the project, however, involve 2100 North in Lehi (currently, the road only stretches from the freeway to the Jordan River; UDOT plans to reconstruct it and extend it to Redwood Road) and from 16000 South to 9000 South in Salt Lake County. The Salt Lake County portion will cost about \$730 million, with construction starting in the spring or summer of 2010 and finishing in 2014, said TeriAnne Newell, Mountain View Corridor project manager.

During the first phase of the project, UDOT, which is in the process of selecting a contractor, will build 2100 North and the Mountain View Corridor as a sort of frontage road with traffic signals, with two northbound lanes and two southbound lanes separated by a wide median. UDOT engineers want the freeway to eventually go into the median area. The freeway will be "graded" or built over and under city streets and have ramps, so traffic can move at a constant speed, Newell said.

Scott Cooper lives near I-15 and is concerned that more access to the freeway will bring more traffic to the area. But he's fairly low-key because he knows the project is needed.

"I really don't have a problem with it, as long as they put sound walls in," he said.

For more information on the corridor, visit www.udot.utah.gov/mountainview.